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FESTINIOG URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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REPORT

FOR THE

YEAR 1940

BY

J. W. MORRIS

L,R.C.P. & S. (ED.) L.R.F.P.S. (GLAS.)
CAPTAIN R.A.M.C. (SPECIAL RESERVE)

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Blaenau Festiniog:

Printed at the "Glorian" Office, Church Street.

To the Festiniog Urban District Council

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of presenting the following report for the year ending December 1940.

The Registrar General's estimate of Mid-year 1940 resident population is 7,515, a decrease of 859 as compared with 1939.

The General Death Rate for 1940 is 17.96 as compared with 17.41 for 1939.

The Birth Rate for 1940 is 11.58 as compared with 15.64 for 1939.

I beg to thank J. Lloyd Humphreys, Esq., J.P., Oakeley Quarries, and E. L. Evans, Esq., Council's Surveyor, for supplying me with Rainfall Records for the year.

I have to express my appreciation of the excellent work done by the two Sanitary Inspectors, and I desire to express my regret that Mr. George Davies who had served the Council faithfully for over 37 years passed away on 5th January, 1941. This has been a great loss to the Council as Mr. Davies was hardworking, conscientious, and most efficient.

I have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servant,

J. W. MORRIS.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	16,323
Registrar General's estimate of resident population ...	7,515
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1940 according to Rate Books	2,403
Rateable Value	£24,315
Net sum represented by a penny rate ...	...£92 : 7 : 5

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The chief industries of the district are Slate and Granite Quarrying, which is extremely strenuous work.

A large percentage of Quarrymen work underground, some down to 700 feet, and the rest work in Mills on the surface, where there is a great deal of dust created from sawing and dressing the slate.

Slate Quarrying in the district is responsible for the prevalence of Pulmonary diseases and Rheumatism.

The climate of the district is cold and wet, the average rainfall for 1940 being 72.43 inches.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1940.

	M.	F.	
Live Births – Total	40	48	Birth rate per 1,000 of
Legitimate	39	48	the estimated resident
Illegitimate	1	3	population 11.58
Still Births – Total	1	5	
Legitimate	—	5	Rate per 1000 total (live
Illegitimate	1	—	and still) births 79
Deaths – Total	70	65	Death rate per 1,000 of
			the estimated resident
			population 17.96

Deaths from puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar General's Short List) :—

	Deaths.	
Puerperal Sepsis	... Nil	Rate per 1000 total (live
Other puerperal causes ...	... Nil	and still) Nil
Total	... Nil	

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All Infants per 1,000 live births	... 102.27
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	... 107.14
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	... Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	... 22
Measles (all ages)	... Nil
Whooping Cough (all ages)	... Two
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	... Two

	Total	M.	F.
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age	4	5	
Legitimate	4	5	
Illegitimate	Nil	Nil	

There were epidemics of Diphtheria, Whooping Cough and Measles during the year.

CAUSES OF DEATHS (R.G.) RETURNS.

	M.	F.
Whooping Cough	1	1
Diphtheria	1	1
Tuberculosis	8	—
Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	1
Influenza	2	1
Cancer of b : cav : and oesoph.	1	2
Cancer of stomach and duodenum	6	3
Cancer of other sites	4	7
Diabetes	—	1
Intra Cran : vasc lessions.	7	6
Heart disease	6	12
Other deseases of cirs : sys :	2	2
Bronchitis	7	2
Pneumonia (all forms)	3	4
Other resp : diseases	2	—
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	2	—
Other digve : diseases	4	3
Nephritis	4	3
Prem : births	—	1
Con : Mal : Birth injuries : infant dis :	—	2
Suicide	—	1
Other violent causes	3	4
All other causes	9	8
Total (all causes) ...	70	65
Live Birth Rate for England and Wales 1940		14.6
General Death Rate for England and Wales 1940 ...		14.3

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

Public Health Officers of the Authority.

Medical—One part time Medical Officer of Health.

Sanitary—There are two Sanitary Inspectors and they discharge all the duties of an Inspector between them. One is acting part time in another department.

They both hold the necessary qualification for the position. Mr. George Davies, the Senior Sanitary Inspector, holds the Inspector of Nuisance's Certificate and the Practical Sanitary Science Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute, and is a Member of the Institute (M.R.San.I). He holds the Certificate in Sanitary Knowledge of the School of Hygiene, University of Liverpool, and the Certificate in Sanitary Engineering of the Institution of Sanitary Engineers and is an Associate Member of the Institution (A.M.I.S.E.)

Mr. Robert John Owen, the District Inspector, holds the Inspector of Nuisance's Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

Laboratory Facilities.

The Examination of swabs from all suspected cases of Diphtheria is carried out by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service, Conway, under the Medical Research Council.

Ambulance Facilities.

(*a*) *Infectious Cases*—There is no Isolation Hospital in the area, so there are no ambulance facilities for Infectious cases.

(*b*) *Non Infectious and Accident Cases*—A Motor Ambulance Car is available at the Memorial Hospital.

(*c*) *Maternity Patients*—Conveyed in the Hospital Motor Ambulance when necessary.

Nursing in the Home.

The Festiniog Nursing Association employs Three State registered Nurses who are also qualified Midwives. One of these Nurses is in charge of Festiniog Village.

No Nurse available for Infectious diseases.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

The Child Welfare Centre is held fortnightly at the Garregddu Chapel Vestry (in the centre of the town) at 2 p.m. The accommodation is all that could be desired.

Ante-Natal and Post-Natal Cases.

The County Medical Officer of Health has arranged a series of these Clinics which are held periodically by Mr. J. Gardiner Wigley, F.R.C.S., Chester. It would be a great advantage to the area if these clinics were held oftener.

Mental Clinics.

Dr. Frank Jones, Superintendent of the North Wales Mental Hospital, Denbigh, is holding the above Clinics at the Medical Department, County Offices, Dolgelley, once a month, where suitable cases can be sent to him.

Orthopaedic Clinics.

Held fortnightly at the Women's Institute. The clinic is visited regularly by the Orthopaedic Surgeon.

School Clinics.

The County Medical Officer of Health arranges these clinics, and I should like to express my appreciation of the thorough and efficient manner this work is carried out.

Tuberculosis Clinics.

This work is carried out under the auspices of the King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association.

The County Tuberculosis Physician attends the Clinic at Wynne Road, on the 1st and 3rd Thursday in the month, also on the 2nd and 4th Fridays at 11 a.m.

The Clinic has an excellent X-Ray plant and is available for ALL CHEST conditions whether tubercle or not.

The Doctor also attends at Llan Festiniog twice monthly (by appointment).

I desire to express my appreciation of the excellent work done by Dr. Jackson at the Memorial Clinics.

Treatment Centre of Venereal Diseases.

This Centre is held at the C. and A. Infirmary, Bangor, on Thursdays 2—5 p.m. for Male Patients, and Fridays 2—5 p.m. for Female Patients.

The Centre is under the control of the County Council, and the County M.O.H. arranges for blood tests (Wasserman Reaction).

Hospitals.

There is one Hospital in the District. The Festiniog and District Memorial Hospital—situated in the Centre of the Town, overlooking Cwmbowydd Valley.

It is a Cottage Hospital for general and Medical cases. It has 19 beds, and is available for persons residing in the following parishes:—Dolwyddelen, Penmachno, Festiniog, Maentwrog, Trawsfynydd, Llanfrothen, Penrhyndeudraeth, Talsarnau, Harlech, Llanfair and Llanbedr.

The Festiniog U.D. Council has a representative on the Committee of Management.

The Hospital is very well equipped for any major operation and possesses an operating Theatre. An X-Ray plant has been installed, with all the latest electro-medical equipment.

The Hospital is doing splendid work.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The whole district except some farmhouses and a few isolated houses is supplied with water from the Morwynion Lake which is filtered and chlorinated, analysis of which proved satisfactory.

Complaints were received of insufficient water at 1 to 11 Pengelli Terrace. The existing $\frac{3}{4}''$ Galvanised main in the back road was replaced by 45 yds. of 2″ Cast Iron Main and 45 yds. of $1\frac{1}{4}''$ Galvanised Pipes.

Separate connections were provided to each house and the new main was connected to the 3″ Cast Iron Main in Gelli Road.

In order to provide for any emergency which would arise if the water supply of the area suddenly failed, instructions were given by the Council to take samples from springs in the area.

Seven samples were sent to the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service, Conway, and proved satisfactory.

It will be necessary to safeguard springs against surface pollution if used in emergency.

Sewerage and Drainage.

During the year sewers were maintained and repairs carried out when necessary.

Rivers and Streams.

A part of Bowydd River between Crosville Garage, High Street, and Trefeini Bridge, a distance of about 100 yards was cleaned of stones and debris which had been carried down from mountains sides during floods.

Closet Accomodation.

Seven new Water Closets were constructed at 1 to 7 Barlwyd Terrace, and the defective Closets built on land at end of houses abolished. Each of these houses are now provided with separate sanitary accomodation. Two Pail Closets were converted into Water Closets, one at 2 Rhydygro, and one at 2 Manod View, Tanygrisiau.

4 new Water Closets were provided for the new houses erected during the year.

Public Cleansing.

There has been no change in the method of collection and disposal of house refuse in the District during the year.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Total number of formal notices issued	5
Number complied with	3
Total number of informal notices issued	187
Number complied with	131
Total number of New Houses completed—	
(a) by Local Sanitary Authority	—
(b) by private enterprise	4
Number of plans new Houses, buildings	3
Visits to Bakehouses	17
Number of notices re defects	—
Visits to Cowsheds	39
Number of notices re defects	4
Visits to milk shops	2
Number of notices re defects	—
Visits to Dairies	18
Number of notices re defects	2
Visits to slaughter houses	163
Number of notices re defects	16
Notices re removal of ashes	18
Notices re removal of manure	3
Notices re defective drains	29
Number of visits to cases of infectious diseases	162
Number of houses disinfected	51
Notices of defective water fittings	78
Number of pail closets converted into W.C.	2
Number of New water closets erected	13
Total Number of Water closets	2419
Pail Closets	63
Privies or other closets	138
Number of closets serving more than one house	13
Milk Samples taken for Ministry of Health	—
For County Council	8
For Local Sanitary Authority	—

Shops and Offices.
Camping Sites.
Smoke Abatement.
Swimming Baths and Pools.
Schools.

The remarks in last year's Report apply to this year also.

Eradiction of Bed Bugs.

No Council houses were found to be infested during the year. There were few complaints about other houses and these were dealt with. The methods employed are the same as mentioned in last year's Report.

Four complaints were received during the year of houses being infested with bed bugs.

Zaldicide fumigant supplied by Messrs. Newton Chambers Ltd. is used for the work.

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year.

(1)	(a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts) ...	185
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	230
(2)	(a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above), which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ...	9
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	16
(3)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	1
(4)		Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...	8

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers...	37

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.

(a) *Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.*

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	None
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—	
	(a) By Owners	None
	(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ...	None

(b) *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ...	67
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remodied after service of formal notices :—	
	(a) By Owners	3
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ...	None

(c) *Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Acts, 1913.*

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	2
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	None

(d) *Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.*

(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were made	None
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	None

4. Housing Act 1936--Part IV.—Overcrowding.

(*a*)	(1)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of year ...	20
	(2)	Number of families dwelling therein	22
	(3)	Number of persons dwelling therein	127
(*b*)		Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	6
(*c*)	(1)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	4
	(2)	Number of persons concerned in such cases	24
(*d*)		Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ...	1
(*e*)		Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report.	

At the end of the year 1940 the number of unofficial evacuees residing in the area was estimated at 1000.

They came chiefly from the bombed areas of Liverpool and also from London, Midlands and the Plymouth areas.

As there are no empty houses in this area most of the evacuees are living in apartments and consequently the number of houses occupied by two families has greatly increased. Several serious cases of overcrowding were dealt with during the year It is usually of a temporary character, and many evacuees only remain for short periods.

Other Housing Remarks.

Demolishing Orders were made on 1 and 2 Back Dinas Road. Undertakings were given on these houses on December 14th, 1939, but not carried out.

Undertakings under Section ii. (3) of the Housing Act 1936 was accepted in respect of Bronllwyn, Tanygrisiau.

New Buildings.

No plans for new houses were received during the year. Plans were submitted for three garages which were approved. Two of these garages were erected, one at Hendy, Tanygrisiau, and one on land opposite Salem Chapel, Rhiw. The proposed garage at Glasgoed, Wynne Road, was not erected.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(*a*) *Milk Supply.*

The number on register at 31st December, 1940, was :—

Producers only	...	5
Retail Purveyors only	...	9
Producers-Retailers	...	20
Total	...	34

Eight samples of milk for T. B. examination were taken for the County Medical Officer of Health and sent to the Laboratory at Aberystwyth.

(*b*) *Meat and other Foods.*

Livestock Restriction on Slaughtering Order 1940.

Under the above scheme which came into operation on January 15th, 1940, the Glynllifon and Benar View Slaughter Houses were selected as Slaugtering Centres for the area by the Government Officials.

Meat is supplied from these centres to all the population living in the area of the Festiniog Urban District Council and also to Maentwrog and Trawsfynydd, which are in the Deudraeth Rural Council Area. Condemned meat is taken charge of by the Government Area Officials.

Fourteen Licenses for Slaughter Men were issued under the Slaughter of Animals Act 1933. Twelve of the above Licences were renewals. The period for which the Licences are issued is three years.

Salvage.

Salvage collection was commenced in May of this year. 22 tons 7 cwts of paper was collected and dispatched to Mills valued at £89-11-0, and Iron and other metals collected and sold at £5-0-9.

Assistance was given by the Women's Voluntary Organisation and by school children.

Further efforts are being made to improve the collection of Salvage in the Area.

In response to the Government Appeal for Aluminium a collection was organised in this area by the Women's Voluntary Service, and in response to their appeal 1 ton 10 cwts of Aluminium was collected in the area.

Communal Feeding of School Children.

An interesting and successful experiment in communal feeding of School Children was inaugarated by the Local Education Authority in this area.

The scheme was commenced in November 1940.

Under the scheme dinner was provided for the children of Maenofferen Elementary Schools and Central School at Brynbowydd Chapel Vestry at a cost of 3d. per head.

The Chairman of the Committee responsible for the Scheme is Mrs. K. W. Jones Roberts, B A., J.P., Llys Owain, Festiniog, and the Secretaries are Mrs. J. E. Thomas, Bronwydd, Festiniog, and Mrs. C. Kenyon Jones, N.P. Bank, Blaenau Festiniog.

Great assistance is given by a voluntary staff of women workers, and too much praise cannot be given to all the ladies in making this centre a great success. Board of Education Officials have visited the centre and were highly pleased at the efficiency of the organisation and quality of dinner provided.

Rainfall in 1940 in Morwynion Lake.

Taken at 9 a.m. daily. Diameter of funnel, 4 inches.
Above Ground, 10 ft. Above Sea Level, 1320 feet.

MONTH.	Total Depth.	Greatest fall in 24 hours.		Number of days with .01 ins. or more.	Number of days with .04 ins. or more.
	Inches.	Inches.	Date.		
January	3.63	.51	26	8	6
February	4.34	.83	5	11	9
March	4.85	1.23	18	19	17
April	3.93	.92	1	23	19
May	2.04	.60	16	13	10
June	1.74	.43	13	11	8
July	5.71	1.47	10	20	18
August	3.52	.78	10	13	13
September	7.13	2.65	17	17	17
October	6.42	1.34	6	14	14
November	10.96	1.55	12	23	23
December	7.51	1.20	30	24	22
Total	61.78			196	176

Rainfall in 1940 at Bethesda Cemetery.

Taken at 9 a.m. daily. Diameter of funnel, 5 inches.
Above Ground, 9 ft. Above Sea Level, 750 ft.

MONTH.	Total Depth.	Greatest fall in 24 hours.		Number of days with .01 ins. or more.	Number of days with .04 ins. or more.
	Inches.	Inches.	Date.		
January	3.19	.84	27	12	9
February	5.03	.81	5	14	11
March	5.53	1.90	18	18	15
April	4.10	.46	4	23	17
May	2.07	.47	16	13	10
June	1.23	.37	22	10	8
July	5.90	1.50	10	20	16
August	2.71	.46	10	14	11
September	6.84	2.40	17	22	18
October	5.33	1.25	6	16	13
November	10.37	1.44	12	28	23
December	8.32	1.23	30	23	22
Total	60.62			213	173

The above two tables of rainfall were supplied by E. L. Evans, Esq., the U.D.C. Engineer and Surveyor.

The Oakeley Slate Quarries. Rainfall 1940.

January	... 5.96 inches
February	... 6.95 ,,
March	... 9.87 ,,
April	... 5.97 ,,
May	... 2.25 ,,
June	... 1.12 ,,
July	... 7.34 ,,
August	... 4.76 ,,
September	... 10.57 ,,
October	... 10.73 ,,
November	... 15.83 ,,
December	... 13.14 ,,
Total ...	... 94.89 inches

The above supplied by J. Lloyd Humphreys, Esq., Manager Oakeley Quarries.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1940

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	Nil	Nil	Nil
Scarlet Fever ...	4	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria	28	Nil	2
Enteric Fever (including Peratyphoid) ...	Nil	Nil	Nil
Puerperul Pyrexia ...	2	2	Nil
Pneumonia	3	3	7
Other diseases generally notifiable	Nil	Nil	Nil
Measles	42	Nil	Nil
Whooping Cough ...	49	Nil	2
Erysipelas	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other diseases notifiable locally	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total ...	128	5	11

Cancer.

No special facilities are available for the diagnosis and treatment of Cancer.

11 men and 11 women died of Cancer during the year.

Prevention of Blindness.

No action was taken under Section 176 of the Public Health Act 1936, for the prevention of blindness, or for the treatment of persons suffering from any disease or injury to the eyes.

Tuberculosis.

New Cases and Mortality during 1940.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0								
1			1					
5	1	6						
15	3				1			1
25		2		1				
35	4				3			
45	1				1			
55	1				3			
65 and upwards ...	1							
Total ...	11	8	1	1	8			1

The ratio of non-notified deaths to total tuberculosis deaths—NIL.

The notification of Tuberculosis is satisfactory in the area.

No action was taken in cases of wilful neglect or refusal to notify.

Fibroid phthisis is prevalent among Quarrymen, and slate dust predisposes the Quarrymen to Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

The unhealthy conditions prevailing underground in some of the Quarries render the men more liable to tuberculosis infection.

Since the Clinic (King Edward VII Memorial Association) was opened a few years ago, it has been proved that Silicosis is prevalent amongst Slate Quarrymen, more especially among underground workers.

During 1940 the Silicosis Act was extended to include on its Schedule—Slate Mining—so as to cover all workmen employed underground at the Festiniog Quarries.

GENERAL.

128 cases of Infectious diseases (apart from Tuberculosis) were notified during the year.

Seven people died of Pneumonia during the year.

Four cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year, but no deaths occurred from Scarlet Fever.

28 cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year, and two deaths occurred from Diphtheria.

42 cases of Measles were notified during the year, but no deaths occurred from Measles.

49 cases of Whooping Cough were notified during the year, and two died of Whooping Cough.

Two cases of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified during the year, but no deaths occurred from Puerperal Pyrexia.

Eleven men and eleven women died of Cancer during the year.

Less New Cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the year, and less deaths occurred from Tuberculosis than in 1939.

A temporary Isolation Hospital is now open at Colomendy, Corwen, where all cases of infectious diseases can be sent from this area.

The examination of swabs for Diphtheria is being carried out by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Castle Bank, Conway. This Laboratory also undertakes the examination of Pathological and Bacteriological specimens, and water analysis.

There is no hospital accommodation for Measles or Whooping Cough in the area.

A supply of Anti-Diphtheria Serum is always kept by the M.O.H. for use of Medical Practitioners in the area.

No primary or re-vaccinations were performed by the M.O.H. under the Public Health (Smallpox preventions) Regulations 1917.

There were no cases of locally contracted Anthrax or Rabies reported.

During the year the Local Authority consented to provide the necessary expenditure for the immunisation of School children against Diphtheria on the recommendation of the M.O.H.